

Payette National Forest

Spring 2011 Intermountain Region

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Stewardship Contracting Produces Ecosystem Benefits

everal years ago someone came up with a bright idea that the Forest Service has products, or goods, that can be exchanged for services such as forest restoration, watershed protection and wildlife conservation activities. As a result stewardship contracting was created as a new tool that enables the Forest Service to achieve land management objectives with a unique form of contracting. Stewardship contracting helps achieve land management goals while meeting local and rural community needs, including contributing to the sustainability of rural communities and providing a continuing source of local income and employment. Another way to describe it is that it puts the focus on "end result" ecosystem benefits and outcomes, rather than on what's removed from the land.

Why is stewardship contracting unique? It combines two contracts, a timber sale and a service contract, into one bundled contract called an Integrated Resource Contract (IRC). Stewardship contracting trades goods for services. Retained receipts from the forest products that are removed will be applied to the service work portion of the IRC. Stewardship contracting uses best value contracting to evaluate a contractor's proposal.

So how does all of this apply to the Payette National Forest (PNF)? The PNF currently has 13 stewardship projects under contract. They range from com-See Stewardship - page 2



D & D Green Trucking and Helmich Industries working at Brundage Mountain Resort on the Brundage Vegetation Management Project in 2010.

SUPERVISOR'S MESSAGE



Suzanne Rainville

Retirement promises more exploration of PNF's splendor

It has been my privilege to serve as the Forest Supervisor on the Payette National Forest for the last 5 years. It is an incredible place with a unique and rugged beauty, and I look forward to spending more time in the woods during my retirement. The FS has been a huge part of my life for the last 33 years and it has been an honor to work with so many dedicated and talented people here and other places.

Watching people come together to find common ground has been the most satisfying aspect of my time on the forest. The Payette Forest Coalition, the Winter Recreation Forum, NIDGS Recovery Working Group and the Wolverine Research Project have made incredible progress. I hope these efforts continue to flourish and I'm confident that PNF employees are just as committed as I am to supporting these efforts.

Floods, fires, and the Bear tornado demanded tough decisions and effective crisis management, but losing 3 employees and one contractor during a forest fire fighting mission in 2006 was the toughest of all to manage both personally and professionally. It's something no one should have to face during their career. I hope the Memorial Service and installation of a permanent memorial offered some solace to those who lost loved ones, but I know that nothing can ever take the hurt away.

I am sure that my interim and permanent replacements will bring a fresh approach to management on the PNF and that they will come to love it as much as I do. Mike Williams, who will be here for a 120-day detail is a seasoned veteran who will ensure that this transition to different leadership goes smoothly. But ultimately, the future of the Payette lies in your hands. I leave you with a wish for clear skies and continued inspired public engagement. See you on the slopes, bike trails and hiking trails!



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The earth's vegetation is part of a web of life in which there are intimate and essential relations between plants and the earth, between plants and other plants, between plants and animals. Sometimes we have no choice but to disturb these relationships, but we should do so thoughtfully, with full awareness that what we do may have consequences remote in time and space.

Rachel Carson

Stewardship - Continued from page 1

plex projects to very simple ones that only remove biomass from past timber sales. The service work activities are equally diverse, and can range from installing fish passage barriers, chipping slash generated from timber removal and hauling it to a local biomass plant for electricity, removing vegetation to reduce wildfire hazards, and decommissioning roads for watershed restoration. The benefits of these examples include restoring fish habitat, chipping instead of burning logging debris, creating a defensible area to suppress wildfires near private homes, and stabilizing and restoring roads that are no longer needed.

The Brundage Vegetation Management Project on the Mc-Call Ranger District is a good example of what stewardship contracting can achieve. Brundage Ski Resort is an integral part of McCall and the surrounding communities. Maintaining healthy forests are desired for the many visitors who ski at the resort and those who may one day live in the development that Brundage has planned for the future.

The Brundage Vegetation Management Project includes the goods, or timber that is to be removed and several service item activities. The thinning of timber will reduce tree densities making them more resilient to insects and diseases and reduce the risk of losing the stands to fire. The service activities include chipping logging slash and transporting this material to a co-generation plant to produce electricity, replacing several fish passage culverts to improve and restore fish habitat and road construction and reconstruction for watershed restoration. While the entire project will take several years to accomplish, skiers already



are enjoying the additional glade or tree skiing that thinning operations created in the fall of 2010.

Another good example of how stewardship contracting can be used to meet restoration goals is the Crooked River Vegetation Management Project on the Council Ranger District. The project objectives include managing the forested vegetation to reduce the risk of uncharacteristic and undesirable wildfire, promoting the development of large tree forest structure, reintroducing fire into the ecosystem, improving forest health and improving habitat for whiteheaded woodpeckers and northern Idaho ground squirrel (NIDGS), a federally listed threatened species. Timber removal, the goods from thinning, will help to offset the costs of restoration activities including upgrading three culverts that are undersized and restrict passage of fish and other aquatic organisms, decommissioning many miles of roads that are not needed for future management, and improving

2011 Active Payette National Forest Timber Contracts

Sale Name	Ranger District	Volume Sold MMBF	Acres Treated	Treatment Objective	Contract Type
Green Hornet	Council	2.5	574	Fuel Reduction	Timber Sale Contract
Lick Creek Squirrel Re-Offer	Council	1.5	504	Fuel Reduction/NIDGS** Habitat	Timber Sale Contract
Crooked River Stewardship	Council	6.4	1,323	Fuel Reduction, NIDGS Habitat	ARRA* Stewardship Contract
Summit Gulch Stewardship	Council	1.7	865	NIDGS Habitat	ARRA Stewardship Contract
Cuprum Stewardship	Council	8.4	728	Fuel Reduction	ARRA Stewardship Contract
Middle Fork Blow-Down	Council	0.98	155	Salvage Blow-Down Material	Timber Sale Contract
Polar Bear Meadows	Council -New Meadows	10.1	1,578	Fuel Reduction, Salvage Blow- Down Material	Timber Sale Contract
Boulder Creek	New Meadows	0.43	220	Vegetation Density Reduction	ARRA Stewardship Contract
Bare Face WUI	New Meadows	1.6	362	Fuel Reduction	ARRA Stewardship Contract
Meadows Slope V	New Meadows	2.0	216	Fuel Reduction	ARRA Stewardship Contract
Brundage VMP	New Meadows	1.3	221	Forest Health, Ski Area Enhancement, Fuel Reduction	ARRA Stewardship Contract
East Lost Squirrel	New Meadows	0.6	339	NIDGS Habitat	ARRA Stewardship Contract
Warm Springs	New Meadows	1.3	866	Fuel Reduction	ARRA Stewardship Contract
New Meadows Biomass	New Meadows	6,666 tons	643	Biomass Utilization	ARRA Stewardship Contract
McCall Biomass	New Meadows	2,595 tons	193	Biomass Utilization	ARRA Stewardship Contract

habitat for the white-headed woodpecker and NIDGS. In addition to these benefits the slash generated from logging will be chipped and hauled to a co-generation plant to produce electricity.

Although both of these projects and the other 11 stewardship projects on the Forest all have the common theme of trading goods for services, not all of the projects were able to generate enough value from the goods to pay for the cost of the services. That's where the PNF and surrounding communities greatly benefited from the passing of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). The Forest received approximately 4 million dollars of ARRA funds, of which over 80 % was obligated to our stewardship contracts to help pay for the cost of the service work items. The ARRA funds allowed the Forest to offer and sell many projects which resulted in providing jobs in the surrounding Counties with high unemployment rates as well as meeting a multitude of restoration goals across the landscape.

Over the past 2 years, the Forest timber sale program emphasis has changed from using the traditional timber sale contract to stewardship contracting, with the exception of firewood and the occasional salvage sale or small green sale. Trading goods for services has allowed the Forest to accomplish more on the ground restoration work than has been able to be accomplished in the past and more importantly has provided more jobs in the local communities. Because of this Forest-wide effort, the Payette National Forest received the Regional Forester's Stewardship Con-

Board Foot Versus Cubic Foot

Since the mid to late 90's the Intermountain Region or Region 4, of which the Payette NF is a member, switched the way timber production is measured from board foot (BF) to cubic foot (CF). A BF is 1" thick, 12" long, and 12" wide. A CF is 12" thick, 12" long, and 12" wide. Commonly, 1,000 BF is written as 1 MBF and 100 CF is written as 1 CCF. Seems you should be able to convert them back and forth easily right? Wrong. The number of board foot in a cubic foot depends on tree diameter, amount of taper, and saw kerf (the width of the saw blade). But generally, a board foot is half of a cubic foot, or 5 MBF equals 10 CCF. Why the different measures? Board foot measures the amount of boards in a given tree while cubic foot measures all of the wood fiber in a tree that can be converted into various products.

More Measurement Facts:

- One log truck contains about: 5,000 BF/5 MBF
- A Typical 3 bedroom House contains about: 25,000 BF/250 MBF
- In Roman Numerals M = "thousand" and C = "hundred"
- MBF=1/2 CCF (metric system of measurement)
- CCF=2 x MBF (American system of measurement)

tracting Award in 2010.

For additional details of the Payette National Forest's Timber Sale program under contract, please visit our website at www.fs.usda.gov/payette. For stewardship contracting information, please visit http://www.fs.fed.us/forestmanagement/stewardship/index.shtml.

Did You Know

The PNF generates approximately \$50,000 per year in campground fees and puts 100% back into campgrounds. At approximately \$15,000 per year, Upper Payette Lakes generates the most dollars. Although the campground has a short season due to the it's high altitude, once open it is full most weekends and holidays and is, at least, at 50% capacity from late June through September.

Partnerships Make It Happen on the Krassel R.D.

he Forest Service is taking a more proactive role to develop and strengthen partnership and collaboration with groups interested in public lands management. If you read any kind of policy like the proposed Planning Rule, Chief Tidwell's Focus areas or Fire Season Themes for 2011 you see it. The goal is to bring the public into public lands management in a more meaningful way, and to encourage people to take responsibility for ecosystem management. It is another way of saying: "We are all in this together."

"The Payette National Forest is on this band-wagon because it gets results," said Forest Supervisor Suzanne Rainville. Cases in point are the effective partnerships that made several recreation projects possible on the Krassel Ranger District (KRD) in 2010. With federal appropriations shrinking and personnel shortages in some areas, KRD relies on partners to help manage 1.2 million acres of land. Recovery Act funding helped last year with \$250,000 for trail maintenance, but funding is of no use without people to do the work. That is where KRD got creative and made partnerships work for them.

The Idaho Trail Rangers and Trail dozer Team worked on 12 trails in the South Fork Salmon River area maintaining 55 miles of trail. These two groups are paid with funds provided by ATV/



Airstrip restrooms being made handicap accessbile at Big Creek airstrip.

OHV licensing tags. There is no cost to the district other than providing housing while the crew is on the district.

The Student Conservation Association (SCA) also assisted with trail maintenance in 2010. Seven interns were stationed at remote locations for 12 weeks working in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness (FCRNRW). These adventurous young people maintained approximately 300 miles of trail. SCA also provided a high school crew of 8 for a 4-week project on the Monumental Trail in the FCRNRW.

The Northwest Youth Corps (NWYC) also pro-

vided trail maintenance crews in 2010. Two 12- person crews spent 5 weeks in the FCRNRW completing heavy maintenance along the Big Creek and Chamberlain Creek trails.

Later in the summer two additional 12 person crews spent 2 weeks completing heavy maintenance on district trails. The Chicken Peak Crew worked on the Mosquito Ridge trail between Chicken Peak and Four-way junction in the FCRNRW. The Cougar Creek Crew worked on the Cougar Creek trail in the South Fork Salmon River area.

The Idaho Trails Association improved trail on the popular Duck to Hum Lakes Trail in the proposed Secesh Wilderness this summer. This was the organization's first project on the Payette NF.

A new bridge will replace the one washed out by surging water on Buckhorn Creek. The District has applied for Idaho Parks and Recreation funds to help cover these repair efforts on the Buckhorn Creek trail.

Altogether, the District maintained or improved approximately 500 miles of trail in the FCRNRW and the South Fork area in 2010. "Since my arrival last year I've been impressed by the creative way District personnel use the multiplier effect to accomplish a ton of work with outside funding and crews." said KRD Ranger Anthony Botello.



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Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves.

John Muir

Bighorn Sheep Amendment Process Winds Down After Seven Years

n July 20, 2010, Forest Supervisor Suzanne Rainville amended the 2003 Forest Plan to identify suitable rangeland for domestic sheep and goat grazing to maintain habitat for viable bighorn sheep populations. The decision was appealed by several appellants and was upheld by Regional Forester Harv Forsgren. The Chief of the Forest Service recently decided to let the Record of Decision stand and will not undertake a review of the Record of Decision. This action constitutes the final administrative determination of the USDA on this issue.

Alternative 7O modified was selected by the Forest Supervisor after several years of analysis, collaboration, and scientific inquiry into the issue of risk of contact and disease transmission between domestic sheep and wild bighorn sheep. The decision allowed continued grazing as authorized in 2010 and includes implementation of management described under alternatives 7P in 2011, 7N in 2012, and full implementation of 7O in 2013 and beyond. Based upon the analysis of model outputs, Alternative 7O modified will provide adequate habitat to support a viable population of bighorn sheep while continuing to provide grazing opportunities on the Forest. The analysis for the



sheep. Large declines in both abundance and distribution of bighorn sheep occurred during the late 1800s and early 1900s as a result of overharvest, habitat loss, competition for forage, and disease transmission from domestic sheep that grazed in bighorn habitat. Today, despite recurring recovery efforts, bighorn sheep occur at less than 10 percent of historic numbers. Only portions of two bighorn sheep metapopulations remain on the PNF, one within Hells Canyon of the Snake River and the other among the Salmon River Mountains.

Federal land management agencies and state wildlife managers recommend the elimination of shared use of ranges by bighorn and domestic sheep. Currently, four permittees are authorized through term grazing permits to graze sheep on the PNF. A risk of contact with resultant disease transmission may occur from any overlap between source habitat and domestic sheep allotments and the travel corridors that bighorn sheep traverse between their source habitats. Therefore, any effective separation strategy must eliminate overlap and reduce the potential risk of disease transmission between the two species. Implementation of 7O modified combined with monitoring and compliance with Forest Plan direction will decrease the risk of contact and potential of disease transmission through the implementation of an effective separation strategy.

The analysis in the FSEIS used a thorough review of the science and experts from the Center for Animal Disease Modeling and Surveillance from the University of California at Davis. Models were developed and analyses completed based on over 54,000 telemetry points representing 400 bighorn sheep. Outputs derived from these models were used as a basis for comparing alternatives with respect to the risk of contact between domestic sheep and bighorn sheep and to estimate the implications for disease transmission between the species.

Background

The Southwest Idaho Ecogroup Land and Resource Management Plans' (LRMP) Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) were completed in July 2003. The Intermountain Regional Forester received five appeals of the decision to implement Alternative 7 as described in the ROD. On March 9, 2005, the Chief of the Forest Service reversed the Intermountain Regional Forester's 2003 decision. To address the issue of bighorn sheep viability, the Regional Forester was instructed to reanalyze bighorn sheep viability of the PNF; amend the FEIS accordingly; and evaluate and adopt as necessary, changes to the Forest Plan management direction for the Hells Canyon Management Area and adjacent areas. Specifically, the Regional Forester was instructed to complete a supplement to the FEIS.



During their 2011 "Sheep Show" the Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF) recognized the efforts of the PNF towards conservation and management of bighorn sheep habitat over the last 7 years. Pictured left to right: Chans O'Brien PNF GIS Specialist, WSF Conservation Director Kevin Hurley, PNF Planner Pattie Soucek, WSF Chairman of the Board Dan Boone, ID Board Member Dan Middleton, Forest Supervisor Suzanne Rainville, Gray Thornton, Pres./CEO of WSF

FSEIS uses published literature and expert knowledge about bighorn sheep habitat and life history traits to model the implications of risk of contact and potential disease transmission in populations on, or adjacent to, the Forest. Alternative 7O modified will provide an additional 346,696 acres for bighorn sheep with a reduction of 68,718 acres for domestic sheep and goat grazing.

Prior to the mid-1800s, numbers of bighorn sheep in North America were estimated to be about 1.5 to 2 million



Travel

Management A Progression of Change

or the past few decades, the number and capability of off-highway vehicles has increased dramatically. As more people than ever before are enjoying National Forest roads and trails, the challenge for Forest managers is to determine the correct balance between off-road vehicle use and natural resource protection. In addition, motorized and non-motorized recreationists, frequently desire the same types of settings.

Federal land managers responded to these challenges with the Travel Rule, adopted in 2005. This travel management policy requires National Forests and National Grasslands to identify and designate those roads, trails and areas that are open to motor vehicle use. This is a change from the past, where in most cases, cross country motorized use was allowed unless expressly prohibited on the national forest.

Where we are, where we have been

Travel management planning on the Payette National Forest (PNF) has been a five year process. The PNF analyzed and used information from recreation managers, resource managers, and the public to propose which routes would be designated open to motorized use and which areas where there would be restrictions. After years of public involvement and analysis, decisions on these routes were documented in four Records of Decision (ROD) - three for snow-free (summer) travel and one for over-snow (winter) travel. All three snow-free RODs were upheld on appeal and are being implemented on the ground.

Snow-free Travel

Designated motorized routes are depicted on a snow-free Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM), which under the new travel management regulations will be the principal enforcement tool for motor vehicle regulations. The MVUM displays only those roads and trails designated for motorized use by the public, the type of vehicles, and season of use allowed. Routes not designated for public use are not shown on the map. For non-motorized information, including designated campgrounds and non-motorized trails, visitors should purchase the Forest visitor map or topographical maps from local stores. The snow free motor vehicle use map is available without charge at PNF district offices or it can be downloaded from the Forest website.

The MVUM also shows some areas where dispersed camping with a motorized vehicle is permitted. These are unimproved areas without picnic tables, fire rings, outhouses or other camping facilities. There are quite a few areas on the Forest, where, due to resource concerns, dispersed camping with a motorized vehicle is not permitted, so visitors should use the travel map in conjunction with the Forest visitor's map to locate these areas or contact a district office

Over-snow Travel

The PNF issued a ROD for over-snow travel in November





The PNF is home to 8 species of big Game: Elk, Moose, Mule Deer, Bighorn Sheep, Mountain Goat, Antelope, Black Bear, Mountain Lion.





There is a limit to the number of shorelines on the lakes; there is a limit to the number of lakes in existence; there is a limit to the mountainous area of the world, and...
There are portions of natural scenic beauty which are God-made and ...which of a right should be the property of all people.

Arthur Carhart





High Metals Prices Keep Mineral Staff Busy

Restoration Continues in Thunder Mountain Mining District

he high price of metals has meant an increase in the number of mineral exploration and development proposals on the Payette NF. Early stage exploration is occurring in Big Creek and the Yellow Pine areas, Midas Gold is in the third year of an extensive mapping and drilling program at Stibnite and the Forest is completing the approval of a controversial drilling project in the Frank Church - River of No Return Wilderness. Numerous small exploration and development projects are proposed or underway in the Warren and McCall areas. The Rescue Mine, an underground gold/silver mine in Warren that began operations in the late 1800's, is gearing up for renewed mining after several years of facility upgrades. Shoshone Silver/Gold, operator of the Rescue, has also proposed an expansion of operations. Several companies are currently exploring and considering advanced exploration projects in the western portion of the



Bunkhouse (1930's)

Thunder Mountain

After several years of negotiations with the property owners, the Trust for Public Land announced in 2005 the acquisition of 722 acres of private land and more than 5,000 acres of unpatented mining claims in the historic Thunder Mountain Mining District with the goal of conveying the property to the For-

est Service and relinquishing the mining claims. Except for access along a narrow mountain road, the District is completely surrounded by the Frank Church – River of No Return Wilderness.

The Forest Service completed acquisition of the private lands in 2008 and Congress withdrew the non-wilderness lands from mineral entry.

The Payette National Forest now has initial funding to finalize a plan to enhance previous restoration efforts and provide recreation and educational opportunities in the District. The Forest hopes to complete the public involvement and environmental review process before the end of the coming summer. The project will likely include backfilling the Lightning Peak Pit, creating vegetative islands to encourage the naturalization of recently mined areas, development of a campground, relocating the Lookout Mountain trailhead, creating ATV, bicycle and foot trails through historic areas, and providing interpretation of the rich cultural and mining history of the Thunder Mountain Mining District. Road access to the District will be maintained, but access to some areas may be restricted while salvage or construction activities are underway.

Golden Hand

Originally discovered in 1889, gold and silver were produced from workings at the Golden Hand property until 1941, with total recorded production of about 1600 ounces of gold and 400 ounces of silver. What makes the Golden Hand fairly unique and more interesting than its mining history would suggest is its location and litigation history.

Mining - Continued from previous page

The Hand is three miles inside the Frank Church – River of No Return Wilderness (FCRONRW) and has been the subject of legal proceedings between the Forest Service and mining claimant American Independence Mines and Minerals (AIMMCO) since 1989.

The FCRONRW was established by Congress in the Central Idaho Wilderness Act (1980). After its creation, the FCRONRW remained open to mining claim location under the 1872 Mining Act until midnight, December 31, 1983. From that time forward the wilderness was no longer subject to the mining laws (withdrawn from mineral entry). However, claims determined to be valid (having a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit) as of that December 31, 1983 withdrawal date can be mined, but the surface remains under Federal ownership.

Three Golden Hand lode mining claims have been determined to be valid. The status of two additional claims has yet to be established. A 2003 Decision of the U.S. District Court for Idaho stipulated that the Forest Service and AIMMCO must work together to reach an agreement on a plan for AIMMCO to conduct geological investigations leading to a new mineral examination (and validity determination) by the Federal government.

The Payette National Forest is now engaged in the challenging task of preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to determine how to mitigate the effects of trucks, heavy equipment and core drilling rigs accessing and working on the Golden Hand claims. You might be asking yourself "why allow this to happen at all?" The answers are found in the 1872 Mining Law, the 1964 Wilderness Act and the Forest Service regulations implementing these laws. The Forest Service decision space is limited to approving a reasonable plan of operations. For-

est Service specialists spent more than two years working with AIMMCO to agree on a plan that meets the proponent's needs and minimizes effects to the resources. Our environmental analysis has focused on the effects of the proposal and has developed additional mitigation measures which have been incorporated into an alternative. The deciding officer, in this case the Payette Forest Supervisor, can select the mitigations which he/she determines are most reasonable

and effective. A Draft EIS is expected this spring and a decision later this year.



Historic Chillan Mill.

Rocks R Us

Mining isn't everything in the Minerals and Geology world on the Forest. We also provide landscape rocks and sand (mineral materials) to the public. Many people build walls of rounded stream cobbles and use sand for driveways, horseshoe pits and general landscaping. Everyone seems to ask for flat rock to build walkways and patios, but the Payette is the wrong place to look. If you want that big, lichen covered granite or basalt boulder for your flower bed we can likely help you out, but come in the office first to obtain a permit. Mineral materials can be obtained at no charge if they are for personal use (not at a place of business or for sale to someone else) but please get a permit first. The no-hassle permit really is free, but we need to know where you want to collect your rocks. Maybe we can help you find what you're looking for.

Travel - Continued from page 5

2010. This plan designated four new areas, in addition to existing closures, that would be closed to over-snow vehicle use in order to provide non-motorized recreationists an area to enjoy backcountry winter recreation without the presence of motorized vehicles.

This decision was appealed by a number of groups. The appeal deciding officer remanded the decision based on the issue that the Forest had arbitrarily designated 2 inches as the minimum snow depth required for over-snow motorized vehicle use.

Due to this remand, the proposed over-snow travel management ROD will not be implemented and over-snow motorized travel will continue to be managed under existing regulations.

Next Steps

The snow-free MVUM will be updated and revised annually. An over-snow MVUM will be available this fall that will show winter travel routes permitted under current regulations.

"...Motorized and nonmotorized recreationists, frequently desire the same types of settings."

Efforts to educate the public about motorized recreation opportunities and the use of the MVUM will expand this summer as well as enforcement of the MVUM. More road and trail signs will be installed to clarify areas of use, and more information will be available at trailheads. The goal is to continue to provide great motorized opportunities while at the same time allowing for a quality non-motorized experience for those who wish it. The Forest will also gather input from experts and the public to quantify the amount of snow that is needed to avoid resource damage from motorized over-snow use.

For further information please contact individual ranger districts or call Jane Cropp, PNF Recreation Manager at 208-0757.



The PNF is home to 46 species of fish, including these species that are native to the Forest:

Chinook Salmon,
Steelhead, Kokanee
Salmon, Cutthroat
Trout, Redband Trout,
Mountain Whitefish,
Bull Trout, White
Sturgeon, Peamouth,
Northern Squawfish,
Several Dace, Redside
Shiner, Several Sucker,
Several Sculpin.



Photo courtesy of The Boise National Forest

The great purpose is to set aside a reasonable part of the vanishing wilderness, to make certain that generations of Americans vet unborn will know what it is to experience life on undeveloped, unoccupied land in the same form and character as the Creator fashioned it... it is a great spiritual experience. I never knew a man or woman who took a bedroll onto an Idaho mountainside and slept there under a star-studded summer sky who felt self-important the next morning. Unless we preserve some opportunity for future generations to have the same experience, we shall have dishonored our trust.

Senator Frank Church





Motoriest and off-road enthusiasts are urged to watch for young riders on Forest roads

n 2009, Idaho Senate Bill 1098 exempted underage (less than 16 years old) drivers of off-highway vehicle (OHV) on Forest Service (FS) roads from licensing requirements. Previously, Idaho law prohibited use of OHVs by unlicensed riders on roads open to passenger vehicle traffic. The National Travel Management Rule requires that public safety be considered in designating roads for motorized use. The 2009 change in Idaho law triggered concern by FS leadership for the safety of all users on roads that are now open to unlicensed operators under Idaho law. As a result, Idaho national forests were directed to evaluate road safety through an analysis conducted by qualified engineers. The Payette National Forest (PNF) has completed the first phase of this analysis and has identified "roads of concern" on the forest.

After passage of SB 1098, the FS worked with OHV user groups and developed legislation to require safety training and certification of underage/unlicensed OHV drivers. The proposal (House Bill 706/Senate Bill 1001) was approved by both the State House and Senate in early April. If this legislation becomes law, Forest assessments may change, reducing the miles of roads categorized as "roads of concern" (ROC).

ROC identified on the PNF OHV road hazard assessment were evaluated and information was shared with local government leaders, OHV user groups and the general

public early in 2011 via public meetings, the PNF website, and briefings.

During the initial safety analysis a variety of factors affecting the probability and severity of accidents were evaluated. These factors included road geometry, sight distance, travel speeds, traffic volume, roadside obstacles and slopes, and the presence of unlicensed operators. The PNF identified 271 miles as preliminary "roads of concern" (ROC) that have relative risk ratings of moderate, high, or very high.

Forests have up to four years to conduct a more detailed safety analysis and develop an action plan to mitigate safety concerns. Potential mitigations range from reduced speed limits, brush removal for improved visibility, warning signs, or other minor engineering changes. In cases where risks cannot be mitigated, OHV use <u>may be</u> restricted. Restrictions would be used as a last resort when no other reasonable and effective safety measures can be implemented.

The hazard assessment yielded the following relative risk ratings for these roads:

- Very High 72.4 Miles
- High 116.6 Miles
- Moderate 82.7 miles

Based on the direction provided by the FS and the results provided by the hazard assessment tool, the PNF decided to take the following actions for the ROC at this time:

 Continue existing restrictions to OHV traffic on 25.4 miles of very high risk road. Existing restrictions to OHV use on two segments of the South Fork of the Salmon River Road and the portion of Goose

Roads of Concern continued

Lake Road between Highway 55 and Brundage Mountain Resort will remain in effect. These roads were restricted because of their paved surface, relatively high speeds, poor sight distance, and seasonally high traffic counts. A 2.1 mile section of the South Fork Road will remain open to OHV use to maintain the existing connection between portions of the Buckhorn/Jakie Creek Trail, a popular OHV loop. The sight distance on this portion of road is better than that found on the remainder of the road and mitigation in the form of signing will be put in place prior to the beginning of the heavy use season.

- Request Regional Forester Exemption on the remaining 47.0 miles of very high risk road (four road segments). Further evaluation and mitigation will be completed on these segments by June 30, 2011. Restrictions on these roads could be implemented via a Forest Supervisor Order this field season if risks cannot be lowered after field verification and mitigation has been completed. The Regional Forester approved the requested exemptions pending further evaluation by forest engineering staff.
- Perform further evaluation on 116.6 miles of high risk road. Evaluation will be completed by the end of the 2011 field season and future restrictions will be



In 2009, Idaho Senate Bill 1098 exempted underage (less than 16 years of age) drivers of off-highway vehicles (OHV) on Forest Service roads from licensing requirements.

considered if warranted. Signage and other public information tools will be utilized to raise awareness and further reduce risks on these roads.

PNF Engineering Staff believe that there are a number of practical actions that can be taken to reduce the risk on roads with moderate to very high risk. The forest plans to launch a public information campaign this summer reminding people to use the Motorized Vehicle Use Map and to inform motorists about the possibility of sharing the road with unlicensed drivers. If you plan to drive on forest roads this summer and beyond, regardless of your mode of transport, please be on the alert for other motorized vehicles that could be using the road.

Did You Know



The Forest still relies on a pack train of 22 animals, consisting of 8 horses and 14 mules, to support projects in trail maintenance, and wilderness and fire management within the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness.

Selway-Bitteroot Frank Church Foundation Benefits Wilderness

The Selway-Bitterroot Foundation (SBF) is expanding its name and working area to include the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness (FCRNRW). The SBF was formed in 2005, and in 2010 the need of a partner south of the Selway, in the FCRNRW circulated. Wilderness staff and line officers from the four forests that manage the FCRNRW met with SBF Executive Director Rob Mason last September at Taylor Ranch to discuss how a partnership would benefit both parties. "It will be the first partnership organization that is focused full time on helping the Forest Service (FS) take care of the trails and wilderness in the Frank," Mason said. An agreement with the FS was signed earlier this year, and with it, the group's name changed to the Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation (SBFCF).

Last year the organization completed over thirty projects in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness with the help of volunteers, paid-staff and interns. Mason believes the organization will be able to accomplish even more in both the Selway-Bitterroot and the Frank Church wilderness areas without taking resources from the Selway. "We're not going to divert resources away from the Selway to work in the Frank. We'll build an additional pool of resources to build a program in the Frank," added Mason.

This year, the SBFC is conducting their first project in the FCRNRW on Marble Creek, and will continue to accomplish goals in the Selway. For more information about how to volunteer or donate to the SBFCF, log onto their website: www.selwaybitterroot.org.



2010 Selway-Bitterroot Foundation Staff and Interns. (L to R) Wilderness Ranger Interns Megan McVicker, Drew Wenderborn, Lead Wilderness Steward Eric Melson, Wilderness Ranger Intern Stephen Countryman, Lead Wilderness Steward Rachel Kaufmann (with crosscut saw), Interns Cassie Kess and Ben Stein. Intern Bart Gutke (kneeling) and Executive Director Rob Mason.

For me and for thousands with similar inclinations, the most important passion of life is the overpowering desire to escape periodically from the clutches of a mechanistic civilization. To us the enjoyment of solitude, complete independence, and the beauty of undefiled panoramas is absolutely essential to happiness.

Bob Marshall





The Buckhorn Bridge (Above) and the East Fork Weiser River Bridge (Left) suffered extensive damage.

Floods Cause Forest-wide Damage

Officials go into high gear to repair Forest roads and bridges

pring floods caused by heavy rains and snow melt in early June 2010 damaged many Forest and County roads across the Payette National Forest. Forest road crews, contractors, timber companies, state governments, and county agencies formed immediate emergency response teams to temporarily repair damaged sections of road. An estimated \$3.9 million in emergency relief funds from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) were provided to the Payette National Forest (PNF), Valley County, and Adams County to assist in the required major repair work. Additional funds were provided by the Federal Emergency Management Administration to the counties for roadwork outside Forest boundaries.

As road damage was inventoried, signs and temporary closures were put in place and roadwork was prioritized to eliminate or reduce resource damage and provide safe

access to the public. Six segments of Forest and County road received significant damage and required extended temporary or long term closures: 1) Warren Wagon Road, 2) Lick Creek Road, 3) South Fork Salmon River Road, 4) East Fork Weiser River Road, 5) Middle Fork Weiser River Road and 6) Wild Horse Road.



Middlefork Weiser River bridge was destroyed by rushing water

Forest Road crews spent the months of June and July clearing debris, cleaning and repairing culverts, and re-establishing roadbeds on sections of damaged road across the Forest. Their timely response and efficiency minimized issues related to resource damage and quickly opened roads to public use.

Valley County spent much of the summer repairing significant damage to Warren Wagon and Lick Creek Roads. They also assisted the PNF with short term repairs on the South Fork Salmon River Road so that resource impacts were reduced while the PNF Engineering Group prepared a contract for a long term solution. Four hundred feet of washed out road was rebuilt by a contractor in record time, and all three roads were opened to the public later that summer. The South Fork Salmon River Road repair was made possible by federal emergency funding.

Adams County repaired and temporarily stabilized a bridge and road segment on Wild Horse Road which quickly provided access to residents living on that road. Adams County plans to complete these repairs and reconstruct the Middle Fork Weiser River Road in the summer of 2011. The Middle Fork Weiser River Road repair work will include stabilizing the bank in numerous areas, replacing two bridges, and reconstructing the 1500 feet of roadway lost during the flooding.

The Forest Service Engineering group is gathering data and preparing contracts to repair six segments of East Fork Weiser River Road, replace the East Fork Weiser River Bridge, and repair several sections of Mill Creek Road for implementation in the summer of 2011.

During the summer of 2010, the Forest Service Engineering was also able to complete the majority of the Recovery Act (ARRA) contracts that were underway. Approximately \$4.7 million in deferred road maintenance and deficient bridge work was completed. The Forest also used forest crews, contractors and partnered with the counties to spend \$1.5 million of Legacy Road and Trail appropriations. The work included replacement of two culverts to provide Aquatic Organism Passage, hardening 15 miles of road along critical fish habitat, decommissioning 12 miles of road and installing long-term closures on another 43 miles of road where resource issues existed, and 25 miles of deferred trail maintenance. Four deficient bridges were also replaced with Legacy Road and Trail funding during the 2010 field season.

PNF Awards, Partnerships



Suzanne Rainville, Forest Supervisor assist with Idaho Aviation Network and Idaho Transportation Department officials. 7. The Payette Forest Coalition, with departing Forest Supervisor Suzanne Rainville, during their March meeting in New Meadows. The PFC has developed a set of recommendations for a landscape scale restoration project on the Council Ranger District to restore ponderosa pine habitat and improve water quality in high priority areas. The Mill Creek/Council Mountain Project draft Environmental Impact Statement will be released to the

Becky Johnstone, Bob Swanby, Wendy Green, Diane Mack Middle Row: Ken Postma, John McCarthy, Michelle Crist, Jean Revaul, Delta James, Ron Hamilton Back Row: Dave Torell, Rick Tholen. 8. The PNF Winter Carnival float called, "A Century of Service - 1911-2011, depicted different aspects of the USFS in McCall featuring a smokejumper, a logger, and a forest ranger. Pictured left to right: Anthony Botello, Sarah Lee, La Dawn Saxton, Cheryl Warner, Brant Petersen, Dennis McCoy, Ruben Irigoyen, Jason Warner.

Highlights

A product of the Payette National Forest and distributed annually to Forest staff and partners.

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The PNF is bounded on three sides by raftable rivers - the Salmon, the Snake, and the Middle Fork of the Salmon

SFSR Repaired in Record Time!

t may be old news to many, but the SFSR Road is now open at Buckhorn Bridge after a four month closure. Reconstruction of the washed out road began on September 7, 2010 and was completed on October 15, 2010. The road was damaged by surging water on June 6, 2010 when much of the road washed away due to a high intensity rainstorm that caused multiple wash outs, culvert failures and flooding incidents across the forest.

The PNF obtained Emergency Federal Highway Administration funding to pay for the \$475,000 repair. Kesler Construction was contracted to repair the road and finished in record time much to the relief of the residents of Yellow Pine who rely on the SFSR road for their winter driving access.

"The design incorporated construction techniques that created fisheries habitat and minimized impacts to the river, and even used rocks native to the area to minimize visual impacts," said Anthony Botello, Krassel District Ranger.

The washout necessitated the closure of the damaged road and remained in effect during last year's Chinook salmon fishing season. A path was improved by the Forest Service to allow people to cross over the damaged portion of road by foot.





Above AFTER: Completed on October 15, 2010 the repair used native rocks and created fish habitat. BEFORE: The SFSR Road was damaged on June 6th 2010.